

Cultural and Economic Services Committee

Date: 14th March

Title: Events Update Report

Purpose of the Report:

To provide a review of recent events and an update on ongoing projects

Contact Officer:

Ben Bodsworth, Town & Community Promotions Manager

Corporate Objective/s	LLTC Five Year Plan – Aim: 3. Vibrancy and Vitality of Town and Town Centre
Implications:	
Financial	Yes - Within existing budgets and use of earmarked reserves.
Human Resources	
Operational/Service delivery	Yes - Delivery of the events programme in calendar years 2021 and 2022.
Procedural/Legal	
Risk/Health and Safety	
Environmental Aims	

1 RECOMMENDATION

Should members be minded, the proposal is:

1.1 Note the report

2 THANKSGIVING & REFLECTION EVENT

2.1 At the time of writing, the Leighton-Linslade Reflects & Gives Thanks event is due to take place on Sunday 6th March. An LED screen will provide an opportunity for members of the public to view photographs submitted to Leighton-Linslade Town Council to feature as part of the event along with doorstep photography provided by Brad Gomon photography whose images we featured in About Town edition during the pandemic lockdown, (July/August 2020).

- 2.2 A printed book of photographs to stimulate conversation and allow members of the public to view all of the doorstep photographs is to be provided along with the opportunity for members of the public to leave written messages of memories from the pandemic. Both items will be stored at the Town Council offices.
- 2.3 Quiet moments of reflection are to be lead by the Mayor, joined by representatives from Central Bedfordshire Council and faith groups from the town at 12pm and 2pm.
- 2.4 Allocated Expenditure for the event is £2,983.50 out of an earmarked reserve of £5,000 (970 / 9057).

3 BUSINESS NETWORK EVENT

- 3.1 The Business Networking Event is due to take place on Wednesday 27th April at Leighton Buzzard Golf Club from 6pm – 8.30pm after a break of two years.
- 3.2 Two new sponsors for the event have been engaged. A business working with small to medium sized enterprises across Bedfordshire & Milton Keynes has agreed to financially sponsor the event, whilst a local design agency has agreed to both financially assist and become part of the event steering group.
- 3.3 Local businesses can register their interest in attending the event via the Leighton-Linslade Town Council website and a social and printed media campaign will begin shortly. It is hoped that 100+ local businesses will attend the evening.
- 3.4 A survey of the needs of a shared workspace was shared with previous attendees of the Business Networking Event. Limited responses by the business community provided no clear guidance on the desire for or the requirements of such a space.

4 BUZZARD TRAILS APP

- 4.1 Officers have received an update from the app developers. At the time of writing, it is hoped that the updated trails and Quiz's on the app will be available within the coming weeks.
- 4.2 The updated app will feature the Sands of Time trail along with a streamlined user interface.
- 4.3 Once testing of the new updates has been completed, officers will begin a programme of increased activity to promote the trails.

- 4.4 A handover period between officers will enable the new Cultural & Economic Support Officer to continue the development of the app.

5 BIG LUNCH

- 5.1 Officers have begun planning for the Big Lunch Food Festival which takes place as part of the Queen's Jubilee Bank Holiday weekend on Sunday 5th June from 11am – 4pm.
- 5.2 Stall holders and traders have been invited to be a part of the food festival in the high-street and following an initial priority booking period for those who have previously attended, applications are now welcome from all vendors.
- 5.3 A stage programme featuring local and regional talent will ensure visitors to the Big Lunch Food Festival are entertained throughout the day. Food demonstrations and street theatre will also be on display throughout the day.
- 5.4 Officers are working alongside Leighton-Linslade Rotary Club and the grounds team to ensure a varied programme of activity within the town centre and Parson's Close Recreation Ground throughout the Jubilee weekend.

6 MUSIC IN THE PARK

- 6.1 Music in the Park returns to Parson's Close Recreation Ground on Sunday 5th June. Concerts are planned to take place weekly from 3pm – 5pm until Sunday 4th September.
- 6.2 Chiltern Hills Brass Band will open the season of concerts, with South Beds Concert Band, Luton Concert Band and RAF Halton Voluntary Band performing on the bandstand throughout June.
- 6.3 Advertising for the concerts will begin 6 weeks prior to the start of the band concert season and will feature both printed and social media.
- 6.4 It is hoped that the lifting of all restrictions within England will see a resurgence in the audience numbers at the Music in the Park series of events following no concerts in 2020 and ticketed events for the majority of 2021.

7 LINSLADE CANAL FESTIVAL

- 7.1 The Linslade Canal Festival returns to Tiddenfoot Waterside Park, Linslade on Saturday 30th July from 11am – 8pm.
- 7.2 Officers have met with members of the Friends of Tiddenfoot on site to undertake a pre-planning site visit and re-establish a good working relationship with the group in preparation for the canal festival, following a 2-year hiatus due to the pandemic.

- 7.3 Traders, demonstrators, performers, and boaters have all been invited to attend with many expressing an interest in attending prior to registration being open.
- 7.4 Officers continue to work with Linslade Middle School and Cedars Upper School to ensure parking facilities can be arranged for the festival and with Central Bedfordshire Council regarding the use of the park for the weekend.
- 7.5 The Canal and River Trust is aware of the festival taking place and are due to undertake remedial works to the banks of the canal around the festival site. It is hoped these remedial works will not interfere with the smooth running of the festival along the canal banks.

8 PROCUREMENT OF FIREWORKS

- 8.1 Members may be aware that a paper was circulated to the Policy & Finance committee regarding the procurement of fireworks for the events taking place in 2022.
- 8.2 To ensure adherence to the financial regulations, members were asked to approve the awarding of the contract due to its financial value. The financial value was split between the Grounds & Environmental Services Sub-Committee budgets and the Cultural & Economic Services Sub-Committee budgets.
- 8.3 The Policy & Finance Committee was asked to agree the expenditure to ensure firm orders could be placed with the supplier in a timely manner, especially for the Jubilee celebrations.

9 CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 Officers commenced planning for the 2022 event programme in December immediately after the Christmas Festival focusing on securing concert bands, liaising with the Business Networking Event steering group, revising documentation, and undertaking procurement of infrastructure services for the coming year. This early, behind the scenes preparation ensures there is time to respond to potential change as officers remain mindful of the potential for restrictions being imposed upon them.
- 9.2 It is hoped that with the lifting of all restrictions within England, a full summer programme of events can be delivered and enjoyed by the residents of Leighton-Linslade and the surrounding areas.

End